

AUTAUGA COUNTY

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Vista Volunteer: Patricia Gober

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Communication between the Autauga County Community and parents to increase the parent's involvement with their children concerning issues related to at-risk behavior.
2. Addressing the first grade retention rate.
3. The need for Delinquency Prevention Programs for at-risk children and youth.

Issues

Issues are the primary concerns or problems facing children in the county.

Health - Children's (0 - 19)
physical and mental well-being in the county.

Increase awareness of Children's Policy Council among parents and citizens on children's issues, needs, and available resources

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Develop brochure on resources for meeting children's needs.
- Disseminate information to the greatest number of families.
- Have brochure prepared and ready to go home by first report card.

Safety - Children live free of abuse, neglect, crime, and drugs.

The need for Delinquency Prevention Programs for at-risk children and youth

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Implement a Juvenile Court Prevention Program through the Juvenile Probation Office for juveniles.

Education - Children
learn the skills necessary to become productive citizens.

Addressing the first grade retention rate

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Continue to support the PASSPORT Reading Program for K-3rd grade students.

Early Care and

Education - Children (0 – 5) are provided opportunities to fully develop emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively and are ready to succeed.

Reading Initiative for Preschool Children

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Involve day cares, foster parents and parents in reading to children
- Provide C E U's to do reading
- Publicize program and seek funding in collaboration with the United Way
- Provide necessary training

Need for coordination between CPC Autauga County and River Region United Way “Born Learning Initiative”

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Meet with United Way representatives
- Assist with publicity about “Born Learning Initiative” in Autauga County

Economic Security

- **Children grow up in a financially stable home where the child's basic needs can be met.**

Support Community in character building to attract development

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Support becoming a Community of Character
- Bring speakers to schools several times a year to address character issues (investigate partners in education and the clergy).
- Identify resources to support this in the community

Explore the Hispanic influence in the county

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Survey Hispanic population
- Bring a member of that community into the Children's Policy Council

Support outreach to single mothers with at-risk children

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Survey the extent of this population
- Find resources currently available

Parent Involvement

and Skills - Parents and guardians participation and effectiveness in fostering an environment for children to become mature, responsible and independent adults.

Increase communication related to children's issues between the Autauga County Community and parents in order to increase the involvement of parents with their children

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Partner with Prattville Housing Authority to disseminate information to parents in the housing communities
- Conduct a media campaign that includes newspaper articles, the purchase of two additional marquees by PASS, Inc., to cover the northern and western portions of the community.
- Develop a partnership with Wal-Mart to disseminate information to parents
- Work with Autauga Interfaith Care Center to disseminate information to parents who seek assistance from the Food Bank and Life Solutions.
- Support the efforts of PASS to implement the Parents @ Work Program
- Support the family Support Center in implementing the Parent Project
- Support the Autauga County Extension Office in implementing researched-based family and child development programs

Increase effective communication between parents and children related at-risk behaviors such as substance abuse, truancy, teen pregnancy and the apathy toward the importance of education

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Identify geographic areas where communication skills and parenting skills can be taught. a. Boys and Girls Club, b. churches, c. Family Support Center, d. Schools, e. PASS, f. Autauga Interfaith Care Center, g. 4-H/ Autauga County Extension Office
- Implement sessions, workshops, and other strategies to train parents in effective communication skills, parenting skills, and childhood development.

Policy Recommendation

1. Designate funding for County Children's Policy Council Directors. (Health)
2. State Level Database. (Health)
3. State to support prevention efforts. (Health)
4. Develop medium for statewide awareness of drug and alcohol abuse. (Parent Involvement and Skills)
5. Continue funding for County Children's Policy Councils. (Safety)
6. Due to higher economic status & location we have difficulty accessing grant dollars. (Economic Security)
7. Tax base is too low to support current and future needs of population. (Economic Security)
8. State needs to generate at-risk funds for school security and at-risk programs. (Economic Security)
9. To foster collaboration with United Way (Early Care and Education)
10. Garner statewide support for family resource/support centers as a point of contact with "Born Learning Initiative." (Early Care and Education)
11. Mandate "parental counseling" for all divorce cases, in order to reduce the stress placed by parents on children involved in custody battles. (Parent Involvement and Skills)
12. Require counseling and parenting classes prior to parents filing a "Children In Need of Supervision" (CHINS) petition. (Parent Involvement and Skills)

Accomplishments

1. Autauga County has a VISTA Volunteer as Coordinator for the Children's Policy Council who was won in May 2005.
2. We filed our Articles of Incorporation in April 2005.